



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

BULLETIN NO. 82-11

April 19, 1982

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Strengthening Travel Authorization Policies and  
Procedures to Eliminate Wasteful Spending on  
Travel

1. Purpose. This Bulletin provides guidance for eliminating unnecessary Federal spending on travel by strengthening agency controls over the authorization of travel at Government expense.

2. Background. Recent studies by several agency Inspectors General, the General Accounting Office and the Interagency Travel Management Improvement Project have identified weaknesses in agency travel authorization policies and procedures and indicated a need for improved controls. On July 30, 1981, the President directed the heads of Executive departments and agencies to tighten travel authorization policies, including reducing the use of general travel authorizations. On December 16, 1981, the President directed the heads of Executive departments and agencies to report to him on steps taken to assure that excessive travel does not occur. The agency reports confirm prior studies' findings that excessive travel is prevented most effectively by increasing management attention to the need for each trip.

3. Policy. Each Executive Branch agency shall authorize only that travel necessary to accomplish the purposes of the Government effectively and economically. Each agency head shall promptly communicate this policy throughout all operating and staff units of his/her agency and establish internal controls to assure that only travel which is essential to the purposes of the Government is authorized.

4. Coverage. The guidance applies to both foreign and domestic travel of all Government personnel, military and civilian, and to other persons whose travel expenses are reflected in costs paid by the Government.

5. General Guidelines. Travel policies and practices of each Executive Branch agency shall reflect, but not be limited to, the following guidelines:

- a. The use of general travel authorizations for entire agencies or groups of employees shall be discontinued. To assure adequate managerial and supervisory attention to the need for all travel, each employee's travel shall be authorized separately under one of the following types of travel authorization:

Unlimited open authorization - permits an individual to travel for any purpose without further authorization.

Limited open authorization - permits an individual to travel without further authorization under certain specified conditions, which may include: specific purpose(s) of travel and geographic areas; limitations on trip costs; effectiveness for a certain period of time, then must be renewed.

Trip-by-trip authorization - permits an individual or group of individuals to take one or more specific trips identified as to purpose(s), itinerary and estimated cost.

- b. To minimize administrative costs and provide for necessary flexibility while maintaining essential controls, use of open authorizations shall be as follows:
  - Unlimited open authorizations for travel shall be permitted only for department or agency heads, their deputies, other principal assistants and managers as approved by the agency head or deputy, and managers of major subunits where no supervisor is present.
  - Limited open authorizations may be provided for employees whose work requires frequent repetitive travel, but should be revalidated no less often than quarterly and should specify realistic limitations on purposes, geographic area, trip duration and costs; travel not covered in an open authorization shall be separately authorized on a trip-by-trip basis.

- Both unlimited and limited open authorizations shall include an estimate of the travel costs to be incurred over the period covered by the authorization. Agencies shall use those estimates to obligate those funds necessary to carry out that travel and thereby improve their travel budgetary controls.
- c. Because of the relatively high costs associated with certain kinds of travel, such travel shall be authorized on a trip by trip basis and reviewed at a level of authority sufficient to provide policy approval. The types of travel covered by this requirement are:
1. All conference attendance, training, entitlement, and relocation travel. In the case of conferences, the approving official shall assure that the numbers of attendees from the agency are necessary and justified. In addition, the need for conferences and meetings for which total travel and per diem estimates exceed \$5000, shall be certified by a level of authority sufficient to provide policy approval as designated by the head of the agency scheduling the conference or meeting. Relocations may be authorized on a move by move basis.
  2. Overseas and foreign travel for all employees, except those whose work requires repetitive foreign travel or emergency foreign travel without advance notification. In addition, U.S. Government representatives and attendees at international intergovernmental conferences must be accredited by the State Department.

Authorization of other travel should be delegated to the lowest management level which has responsibility for both program accomplishment and obligation or commitment of funds.

- d. Each travel authorization and the associated travel vouchers shall specify clearly the purpose of the travel. To promote uniformity in the way that travel purposes are specified, agencies should adopt travel purpose categories that conform as much as possible with the illustrative travel purpose categories listed in Exhibit 1.

- e. Authorizing officials should be cognizant of travel plans, including plans to take annual leave in conjunction with travel, and should assure appropriate consideration of the need for the travel, use of travel substitutes (mail, teleconferencing etc.), and the most cost-effective routing and means of accomplishing travel.
- f. A travel advance shall only be issued in conjunction with a travel authorization and the amount of the advance shall be kept to the minimum out of pocket expenses that the employee is expected to incur prior to reimbursement. This applies both to advances issued on a trip by trip basis and to so-called permanent advances issued in conjunction with open authorizations. The need for a permanent advance and the amount of the advance shall be reviewed and justified when the corresponding open authorization is reviewed and justified.
- g. Agency heads should assure that the appropriate personnel receive adequate training in travel management techniques. Agencies may seek assistance for such training from the Office of Personnel Management, the General Services Administration and, in the case of the uniformed services, the Department of Defense.

#### 6. Reporting Requirements.

To assess its own improvements in travel authorization policies and procedures and to provide the data necessary to demonstrate compliance with the President's directives, each Department and agency will submit a Report on Agency Travel Authorization Policies and Procedures as of June 30, 1982, using the format set forth in the attached Exhibit 2; also a brief summary narrative report of agency travel authorization improvement actions taken between January 1, 1982, and June 30, 1982. These reports will be submitted by August 13, 1982.

7. Information Contact. Inquiries concerning this guidance or reporting requirements should be addressed to the Management Improvement and Evaluation Division, Room 10208, NEOB, Washington, D. C. 20503.

8. Sunset Date. This Bulletin will expire on January 31, 1983.



David A. Stockman  
Director

Attachments

Illustrative Travel Purpose Categories

<u>Purpose Category</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Site visit	Visit to a particular site in order to personally perform operational or managerial activities; e.g., oversee programs, grant operations, or management activities for internal control purposes; carry out an audit, inspection, or repair activity; conduct negotiations; provide instructions; provide technical assistance.
Information meeting	Attend a meeting to discuss general Agency operations, review status reports or discuss topics of general interest. If a site visit was conducted as part of the same trip, consider the entire trip to be Site Visit.
Training attendance	To receive training.
Speech or Presentation	To make a speech or a presentation, deliver a paper, or otherwise take part in a formal program other than a training course.
Conference attendance	To attend a conference, convention, seminar or symposium for purposes of observation or education only with no formal role in the proceedings.
Relocation	To move from one official duty station to another (same as a Permanent Change of Station or PCS move).
Entitlement travel	Travel to which an employee (or dependent) is entitled as a result of an assignment; e.g., official vacation or home leave; medical, emergency, and education travel.
Special mission travel	To carry out a special Agency mission; e.g., non-combat military unit movements; provide security to a person or a shipment (such as a diplomatic pouch); move witnesses from residence to other locations; cover travel by Federal beneficiaries and other non-employees.
Other travel	To travel for reasons (purposes) which are not shown in one of the other eight (8) categories.

Exhibit 2  
Page 1 of 2Report on Agency Travel Authorization Policies and  
Procedures as of June 30, 1982

Department/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Does your Department/Agency publish regulations which specify procedures under which travel must be authorized?  
  
 \_\_\_\_\_ No.  
  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes. Please cite regulation(s), date(s), the originating office(s), and summarize content of regulation(s) on a separate sheet of paper.
2. Please list the types of travel authorization your Department/Agency utilizes and, for 1981 and 1982, show the numbers of employees covered by each type and the percentage of your agency's trips authorized under each type.(1) Also indicate the frequency with which each type of authorization is reviewed and reissued under current agency procedures. This information should be provided on the Summary of Agency Travel Authorization Coverage and Review Practices attached as Table A.
3. For each type of travel authorization listed on Table A, please list on a separate sheet of paper the criteria considered prior to issuing an authorization of that type. These criteria should include, but not be limited to the level of employee to whom such an authorization would be given, the nature of the travel covered, etc.
4. Please indicate below for the following purposes the number of reviews required to authorize travel and the title or responsibilities of employee conducting each review (use a separate sheet of paper, if necessary):

Purpose	No. of Reviews	Titles or Responsibilities of Reviewers(2)
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## Domestic Travel:

- conference attendance
- training attendance
- entitlement
- relocation
- other

Notes: (1) For 1981, use calendar year 1981 data or fiscal year 1981 data, whichever is most readily available. For 1982, use the period between the ending date of the period used for 1981 and June 30, 1982.

(2) Be certain to indicate the highest level of review.

4. cont.

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>No. of Reviews</u>	<u>Titles or Responsibilities of Reviewers (2)</u>
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Overseas and Foreign  
Travel: (3)

- conference attendance
- training attendance
- entitlement
- relocation
- other

5. Does your Department/Agency provide travel management training to those officials empowered to authorize travel?

\_\_\_ No.

\_\_\_ Yes. Briefly describe type of training provided.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Does the travel authorization form require identification of the specific purpose(s) of the travel?

\_\_\_ Yes.

\_\_\_ No. Please explain briefly departures from such practice.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Does the travel voucher require identification of the specific purpose(s) of the travel?

\_\_\_ Yes.

\_\_\_ No. Please explain briefly departures from such practice.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. If either the travel authorization form or the travel voucher requires identification of trip purpose, please list the purpose categories and definitions used and attach on a separate sheet of paper.

Notes: (2) Be certain to indicate the highest level of review.

- (3) For purposes of this report, "overseas" includes travel to Alaska, Hawaii and overseas U.S. territories and possessions. If approvals for such travel are different than for foreign travel, please so indicate.

Table A

Summary of Agency Travel Authorization Coverage  
and Review Practices

Department/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Prepared By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorization Type	1981 <sup>(1) (2)</sup>		1982 <sup>(2)</sup>		
	No. of Employees Covered (4)	Estimated Percent of Total Agency Trips	No. of Employees Covered (4)	Estimated Percent of Total Agency Trips	How Frequently Reviewed Reviewed
General travel authorization (Covers entire organization and groups of employees)					
Unlimited open authorizations (Permits an individual to travel for any purpose without further authorization)					
Limited open authorizations (Permits an individual to travel without further authorization under certain specified condi- tions)					
Trip-by-trip authorization(2) (Permits an individual or group of individuals to take one or more specific trips identified as to purpose, itinerary and estimated cost)					
Other (define type of authorizations used by the agency that differ from the types previously listed)					
Total				100%	

Notes: (1) Use calendar year 1981 data or  
fiscal year 1981 data, whichever  
is most readily available.

(2) Please provide this data by  
authorization type and indicate  
the basis of these estimates

(3) For trip by trip authorizations, please  
indicate the number of such authorizations  
issued over the reporting period.

(4) For 1981 and 1982, indicate the appropriate  
number of persons covered by your travel  
regulations.

	1981	1982		1981	1982
Management reports	_____	_____	Employees	_____	_____
Sample of trips made	_____	_____	Others	_____	_____
Estimate by management	_____	_____	Total	_____	_____
Other, please specify	_____	_____			